Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem.

A SERMON,

Preach'd at

St. MARY's, in READING,

AT THE

VISITATION

Of the Reverend

Mr. *WILLIAM RICHARDS*,

ARCH-DEACON of BERKS,

April the 12th. 1692.

By *WILLIAM GOSTWYKE*, M. A.
And RECTOR of PURLEY.

LONDON, Printed for *Randal Taylor*,
in *Amen-Corner*, 1692.

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Before the ARCH-DEACON of *Berks*,

On *April* the 12*th*. 1692.

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A SERMON

Preach'd at

St. *Mary's*, in *Reading*, &c.

PSALM cxxii. *ver.* 6.

Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem.

THis Psalm is one of those the Royal Author has himself thought fit to stile a *Psalm of Excellencies*: And no wonder; for besides an excellent piece of Rhetorick, the Original contains in whole, in a double *Paranomasy*, or treble *Cadency*, the very Text presents us with no less than three, in just so many words: An excellent Duty, *Pray*: An excellent Mercy, *Peace*: An excellent City, *Jerusalem*. *Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem*. Of these in their Order. And,

I. *Pray*.

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I. *Pray.* 'Tis an excellent Duty. *Prayer*, as to the ſorts of it, is at leaſt threefold; Publick, or Private, Stated, or Occoſional; Mental, or Oral; conceived only in the Mind, or deliver'd by Word of Mouth. —— *Prayer*, as to the Parts of it, conſiſts of Three too: Confeſſion, Supplication, and Thankſgiving. The Object of our Confeſſions, in our Imperfections and Offences; of our Supplications, is the Supply of our Wants and Exigencies; of our Thankſgivings, is our Receits of Mercies. —— *Prayer*, as to the Nature of it, is a ſolemn Addreſs of a pious Perſon to the Throne of Grace, with an humble Confeſſion of his Defects and Deſerts; with an earneſt Entreaty for Pardon and Mercy, and a free Oblation of his beſt Thanks, for all Benefits and Favours however thence receiv'd. —— 'Tis a thing then, not haſtily to be begun, or careleſsly ſhuffled over, as if were ſome παέργον, ſome *petty*, or *bye* buſineſs, that might as well be let alone, as done; but with good Forethought, Precaution, and Preparation. 'Tis Solemn. —— 'Tis a thing then, not ſaucily to be enterpriz'd or us'd for Oſtentation of

our

our Parts, to ſhew what a facility of Prate we have; or what a familiarity with God we have. Too voluble a Tongue has been known to run beyond its Wit, and Sence too; and ſuch a familiar Spirit has been, e're now, rebuk'd with a, *Get thee behind me, Satan*: No, if not always penn'd, I mean, the Oral, Stated and Publick; yet ought it carefully to be Compos'd, Reviz'd, and every word weighed, leſt we offer the *Sacrifice of Fools*, when we conceit our ſelves moſt wiſe. 'Tis an Addreſs of, ---- Of a pious Perſon, loyal in Heart however, though lame in Feet, and tardy now and then; as good *Mephibo-ſheth*, by a falſe *Ziba*'s means; and he, good Man, by ſome deceitful Luſt or other, inſinuating, ſurpriſing, or impoſing on him.---- Whether a wicked Man, as ſuch; that is, continuing, and contented ſo to be, can pray or no, is made a doubt by ſome: Cry and howl under Correction; that is, grate the Ears of Almighty God with an ungrateful Yell, they can; but whether they can pray, or no, is ſtill the Doubt. ---- But no doubt, if the Wicked will forſake his evil way, do that which is lawful and right, go and lay down his Enmity, be reconcil'd to God,

and then come with his Oblation to the Altar, 'twill turn him to account: His Perſon firſt accepted, his Addreſs will be admitted. ------ And much more then; the pious Perſon, that has been long ſo, that comes invited and expected; that comes with more ſhame of Face, and grief of Heart, than any ſinful Satisfaction, was ever worth him in his life; that comes confeſſing Sin, with all its odious Aggravations, with a deſign to leave it; and begging Grace, to ſerve God acceptably, with a deſire to have it; and having paid his pureſt Thanks for all the Favours Heaven has done him, returns rejoycing, though he went forth weeping. ---- The Sheaves indeed, both of Succeſs and Joy, he brings back with him, are owing, not to his own Conduct, how decent or how dutiful ſoever; but to a Friend he has in Court; *an Advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous:* And though but one that's *ex officio* ſo; yet is that one a ſure one, and more worth than thouſands of thoſe we know not, or that are ignorant of us. And hence 'tis mainly, if not only, that *Patulæ Patris Aures*, that the *Golden Sceptre* is extended to him; and come when he will, he finds

finds Admiſſion, Audience, and Acceptance: It is the Throne of Grace that he addreſſes. *Prayer*, as to the Excellency of it, is that that the beſt Food and Phyſick are to an empty or diſtemper'd Body; and better than the beſt of both, to a diſorder'd and Sinſick Soul: It raiſes a drooping Head, fixes a roving Eye, tames an unruly tongue, opens an obſtructed Breaſt, and cloſe Fiſt, ſoftens a hard Heart, and makes the ſtiffeſt Knee bow to the Name of Jeſus: So it illuminates a dark Underſtanding; it rectifies a crooked and perverſe Will; ſeats and ſettles the wandring and wild Affections on their right and proper Objects, and brings the whole Man to the Obedience it ows to Chriſt: It hands the Soul within the Veil, and there preſents it with things inviſible to any other Eye: It abſtracts and raiſes the Soul from mean and Elemental things; diverts it, and delights it; ſurprizes and raviſhes it with things more noble, and more worthy of its Birth, Breeding, Queſt, and Acquiſition: It transforms the Soul, and changes it into the ſame Images it beholds, from Glory to Glory, and makes it ſo far Partaker of the Divine Nature. 'Tis a Communion with God himſelf, and an An-

ticipation of Heaven here on Earth. 'Tis both *Pabulum, & Symbolum Vitæ.* 'Tis the Repaſt our Graces live on here, and the earneſt of that Glory we ſhall live in hereafter. *O curvæ in terras animæ, & cœleſtium inanes!* "O dull, indocible, ſenceleſs, and "ſoul-leſs Animals, that can hear no Muſick, "ſee no Beauty, taſte no ſweetneſs, perceive "no Rarity in ſo tranſcendent and divine an "Excellency." ——— Let this ſuffice to be ſaid in *general*; and come we now to Prayer, as a Duty in *particular* recommended to us: And ſo it may fall under a double Conſideration:

I. *As very Acceptable and Pleaſing unto God.*
II. *As very Effectual and Prevalent with God.*

I. *As very Acceptable and Pleaſing to God.* And that appears both from the ſtrict and numerous Precepts for it; and from the great and glorious things are promis'd to it. Why ſhould we be ſo oft commanded, and ſo much encourag'd, to do that aſſiduouſly, and without fainting; to do that always, and without ceaſing; which were, or none at all, or elſe no acceptable Service being done? Nature does nought

nought in vain, much leſs the God of Nature; nor can we fairly think he would have us to do it. He himſelf is ſtyl'd the *God of Prayer*: Not becauſe he only is to have it, who alone can hear and anſwer it: Not only as his peculiar Prerogative, but Delight and Pleaſure. His Houſe is called the *Houſe of Prayer*: Not as if there were nothing elſe to be done there; for there was *Moſes*'s Chair, the Law of *Moſes*, read and expounded there: But becauſe, as Prayer began and ended all they did; ſo was it the moſt eminent part of the whole Service they performed there: And therefore not the Worſhip only, but the very Place and Houſe of Worſhip, had its Denomination. —— I hope more Candour from my Auditory, than to be miſtaken, to deſign the Downfall of the Pulpit, while I deſire only to Support the Altar. Preaching, I know, is virtually the Power of God unto Salvation; and I wiſh it better valued, and better followed, that it might be actually ſo to all the *Iſrael* of God. What might be ſaid in *Eccleſia Conſtituenda*, is no Argument in *Eccleſia Conſtituta*. Thanks be to God, Ours is a Church founded on the Rock of Ages, both ſettled, and cemented,

and eſtabliſh'd, by the beſt Laws. Our whole Nation is indeed a *Goſhen*, a Land of Light; and it cannot be the fate of God's People, now a-days, as it was once, to periſh for want of Knowledge: The Goſpel is not hid; no, not to them that periſh; but they die, that do die, only becauſe they will die: So that Preaching has its intrinſick Excellency; and God forbid but it ſhould have its Honour too: But what I ſpeak, is what I think, It ſhould write *ſecond*, and not *firſt*: And I ſpeak it only to mend thoſe whom you can go no where but you ſhall meet, ready to ſay, What ſhould we do at Church, when there is nothing but a a few Prayers? *Nothing but a few Prayers!* 'Tis ſeldom there are thoſe, and nothing elſe. *Nothing but a few Prayers!* And yet thoſe few, it ſeems by the Objection, are too many. *Nothing but Prayers!* In effect, as if they did ſay, ---- Nothing but honouring and ſerving God, in the way he himſelf chuſes, calls for, is pleas'd with, and plentifully rewards. Who might as well ſay, Why ſhould we be at ſo much pains to get to Heaven, where nothing but *Magnificat's*, *Te Deum's*, and *Hallelujah's*, are the great Buſineſs and Entertainment of Eternity?

nity? *Prov.* 15. 18. 'tis ſaid, *The ſacrifice of the wicked, is an abomination to the Lord.* The Reaſon's plain; their Hearts are rotten, their Breaths ſtink, and thence God cannot bear them. But it follows; *The prayer of the righteous, is his delight:* The Righteous's Prayers do more than tacitly imply their Faith, and full Aſſurance, that God is, and is withall, an able and liberal Rewarder of thoſe that duly ſeek, and freely ſerve him: Not like the *Cretian* Image, that had no Ears; nor ſtupid *Plutus*, that had no Eyes; nor *Dagon*'s Stump, that had no Hands; nor great *Diana* of the *Epheſians*, abroad, when lack't at home; nor greater *Jove*, ſo full of buſineſs of his own, he only could, at certain times, and certain loop-holes, look out of Heaven, and liſten to his Votaries. The Righteous's Prayers, aſcribing truly that to God, that theſe poor Heathens could not hope for, from the imaginary Deities they ador'd, muſt needs be very grateful and well-pleaſing to him; eſpecially conſidering what care he has always taken, to ſtand diſtinguiſh'd from all theſe, and the like: And that his Prophets, upon Occaſion, have been put to prove, if not his very Eſſence, yet his Supremacy above all ſuch Pretenders

ders to Mens Prayers, from this very Topick.

So much then for the Precepts for it; as to the Promiſes made to it, the time would fail me: But to name the Generals, much more deſcending to Particulars. That ſingle one therefore of our bleſſed Saviour, ſhall ſuffice for all, *Luke* 11. 9, 10. *Ask, and ye ſhall have; ſeek, and ye ſhall find; knock, and it ſhall be opened to you.* Where 'tis eaſie to obſerve, the Promiſe comes from the ſame hand, and is of the ſame Extent and Latitude with the Command: And whence 'tis obvious to infer, That 'tis but ask and have. Nothing indeed particularly is expreſs'd; but 'tis that all things good and neceſſary may be underſtood.

2. *Prayer is very effectual and prevalent with God.* And ſo it is, both coming from a ſingle Perſon, and an aſſembled Congregation: The fervent Prayer of one righteous Man availeth much, *Jam.* 5. 16. But leſt any ſhould think this *gratis dictum*, only ſpoke of courteſie; He that aſſerts it, proves it: And leſt any ſhould think the Perſon inſtanc'd in, ſo extraordinary, as never to be match'd again; He pronounces him, ὁμοιοπαθὴς ἡμῖν, *a man of like*

like passions or infirmities with us: A very good Man indeed, but no better than, by the Grace of God, another Man, or any one of us may be: The Person was *Elias*; and his Prayers, like some Weapons, carry'd a double Edge: He pray'd first for a Suspension of Rain, and there was none for three years and an half; again he prayed for Rain, and it came so quick, and such abundance too, that the King was forc'd to ride, and the Prophet himself forc'd to run for't, or they had both come short home. *Jer.* 11. 14. *Pray not for this people*, says Almighty God to the Prophet. Strange! that a Prohibition should come for Prayers, and from the Court of Heaven too! It argues, it had been harder to have deny'd him, if he had pray'd, than to forbid him praying. *Exod.* 32. 10 *Let me alone*, (saith God to *Moses*,) *that I may destroy this people; and I will make of thee a great nation.* — *Let me alone*; that is, *Forbear thy Prayers*, (saith the *Chaldee* Paraphrast.) What! Is the Kingdom of Heaven like to suffer violence? One violent Hand like to take it by force? That the Unlimited thus makes court for his own Liberty and Freedom? That the Omnipotent makes offer of a Composition, and promises a mighty

Boon, but to be left at pleaſure, but to be *let alone?* It ſhews there is a ſingular Vertue; not to ſay, *Cum Medicorum Filiis*, a Sovereign Power in the Righteous's Prayers. Hence abſent *Iſaac* won a prudent Wife; and barren *Hannah* got a Prophet to her eldeſt Son: Hence *Solomon* got his admired Wiſdom, and had Riches, Honour, and length of Days, ſuperadded, without asking for: Hence *Hezekiah* purchas'd a new Leaſe of Life, when his old was juſt expiring, and he dying: Hence Fire has been fetch'd from Heaven in a clear Day; and Rivers of Water from a hard and dry Rock: Hence Tears have been forc'd from Hearts harder than the nether Mill-ſtone; and Relentings, ſeemingly at leaſt, from the Invariable himſelf: Hence, would the time give leave, I might ſhew you, how *Gideon*, *Barach*, *Samſon*, *Jeptha*, *Samuel*, and the Prophets, by Faith; that is, as I conceive, the Prayer of Faith, have all appear'd like *Manoah*'s Angel, and done wond'rouſly. —— But I paſs over, from *Cloſet* to *Common Prayers*; that is, from Single to United Forces: *Mat.* 18. 20. *Where two or three are gathered together, there am I in the midſt of them.* Not, There will I be, if they will ſtay, and wait long enough; though

though that were very gracious: No here is no εὐκαίρως, & ἀκαίρως no *Seaſon unſeaſonable* to come in; no labour to be loſt in coming: He that is to be there, is there before us; and He that is to hear and help, is ready, and reſolv'd; as the Phraſe imports, *In the midſt of us*: We are as ſure to *ſpeed*, as to *ſpeak* with him. But for the Prayers of *Moſes*, *Aaron*, *Hur*, *Phineas*, *Caleb*, and *Joſhua*, what had the repeated Sins of *Iſrael* brought them to, before they came to *Canaan*? And many years after, in the Captivity they were thence carry'd into, what had the horrid Plot of *Haman*, and the fatal Decree upon it, coſt them, had not Queen *Eſther* call'd them all to Prayers? When poor St. *Peter* was kept by bloody *Herod*, in ſo ſafe cuſtody, that 'twas impoſſible, without a Miracle, he ſhould any way eſcape him; 'tis certain, the very Night before his publick Tragedy was intended to be acted, an Angel comes and ſaves him: So ſurprizing a Mercy to the good Man himſelf, that was as faſt aſleep, as he was in Chains, that when 'twas doing, and in good part done, he only thought he ſaw a Viſion. But Heaven never ſleeps: And 'tis as certain, that the procuring Cauſe of this good Angel's both

Miſſion, and Commiſſion, was the unceſſant Prayers of the Church for him, *Act.* 12. 5, & 12. 'Twas *Luther*'s Prayers, aſſiſted and accented by ſome few Others, that made the Devil let go his Hold, and give up his Bond againſt a certain Young Man, who had thereby ſealed, and delivered himſelf over, Soul and Body, to that foul Fiend, for a ſmall Summ of Money. Let it no more be thought a thing incredible, That the Prayer of Faith, ſhould Heal the Sick, or Raiſe the Dead; ſince it can Void, and make of no Effect, a ſolemn League and Covenant with Hell it ſelf; and ſave, in ſome ſence, the very Damn'd. That's the *Firſt*: *Pray.* —— The

Second Excellency, is *Peace.* —— *Peace* is an excellent Mercy: *Jeruſalem*'s moſt certain, is a Jewel.

This is, as to the ſorts of it, as the Parties concern'd in it are: Either with God above; with the World without; or of it ſelf, within it ſelf. Without the Firſt, there is no poſſibility of *Jeruſalem*'s being ever happy: Without the other Two, no hope of her being long, or very eaſie.

I. To the Upholding or Maintenance of the First, *Our Peace God*, we must at least lay down all Hostility, in Thought, Word and Deed. No Thoughts must perk up against or above God: As this, That Providence would do better, to erect a Publick Office to Reward the Good, and Punish the Bad immediately, and in open sight. Down with this, and the like towring Imaginations. Our Words had need be well examin'd, and strictly search'd, before they are let pass: For there are those that pierce deeper than Swords, and separate very Friends; and those that carry Fire in them, that may raise no small Combustion. Lastly: All Actions of Trespass must be studiously forborn, that, *ipso facto*, null the Peace; as all Sin, and superfluity of Naughtiness: And what makes for Peace, must be as carefully attended, and put in use and practice. In sum, An unfeigned Assent and Consent, a free and full Conformity, must be given to all the Laws and Canons of Divine Establishment.

II. As to Peace with the World, and those without, we have a Rule and Precept from him

him in whom was *no guile*. *Be wiſe as Serpents, innocent as Doves.* The Serpent is not uſually the firſt Aggreſſor; nor ſhould we needleſsly provoke thoſe that are like to be too many for us: He has a quick and watchful Eye, and can diſcover Danger at a diſtance: Nor ought we to be leſs circumſpect, or more ſecure, who are beſet on all ſides: He ſtops his Ears, leſt he be charm'd; and would to God we were as deaf to all the *Syren*-Songs of ſinful Pleaſure. When Danger comes, he can't withſtand; he ſhifts, and runs for't. A prudent Man fore-ſeeth an Evil, and hideth himſelf: If the worſt comes that can come, he will expoſe his Body, to ſave his Head: So ſhould we Over-board with all we have, rather than make Ship-wreck of Faith, and a good Conſcience. Thus far the Dove may bear the Serpent company, and all well, at leaſt no harm: And, as I take it, one ſtep farther, from the Example of an Apoſtle, without Exception: By becoming all things to all Men, by all means to win ſome: If we can do it by a natural Sweetneſs of Blood and Temper, or an acquired Conqueſt over our own Paſſions; if, without any ſneaking, ſlaviſh, ſelfiſh Spirit, Humour, or Behaviour; with-

without a voluntary Humility, baſe Flattery, or damn'd Hypocriſie: In ſum, If we can do it, as he doubtleſs did it, without ſin, I think we ought to do it; and in ſo doing, that we bid faireſt for the ſame Apoſtle's poſſibility of Peace with all Men.

III. As to the Peace of it ſelf, or that within it ſelf, much more might be done in it than many imagine, would every one but contribute that little he is able, and might eaſily. Would we but all part with, not of our neceſſary Subſtance, but Superabundance, that little we could well ſpare; would but the Strong leſs glory in their ſtrength; and the Weak, leſs indulge themſelves in needleſs, and yet endleſs Scruples and Diſſatisfactions: Would but the Children of the ſame Father love and live as Brethren; and when, and where their way is plain and ſmooth, go hand in hand together; and if they ſhould chance to meet with a *ſtone of ſtumbling*, or *rock of offence*, one help, and t'other be content to be helpt kindly over: Then would there be leſs withdrawing and ſeparating from our Churches; and leſs complaining, (to ſpeak ſoftly,) in our ſtreets. Happy are the People

that

that are in such a case; yea, double happy such a People, as having, doubtless, the God of Peace for their God.

Peace, as to the Nature of it in General, for I must no longer run Divisions, is, an unanimous Agreement among Men in what is good: A full Consent, that carries with it the Votes of Judgment, Will and Affections; and commands a suitable demeanour of Thoughts, Words and Actions; and all this to what is good, to free it from the herding of wild Beasts, the banding of a Faction, and the conspiracy of Thieves and Traitors. 'Tis much the same with Love, Unity, and Friendship: —— *Facies non omnibus una,* —— *Nec diversa tamen, qualem decet esse sororum:* —— "'Tis where there is no Contention, but for "the Faith; no Strife, but that of Love, "to agree the better; no Emulation but "the best, to exceed each other in Well-"doing.

Peace, as to the Excellency of it, is the very Life, Breath, and Being of Societies: 'Tis what Setting is to a Broken or Dislocated Member; what Ease is to an Inquisition'd Body; and what the Light of God's Countenance is to a benighted Soul, lost in the dark,

dark, and ready to despair: 'Tis what, *Incolumem odimus, sublatum ex oculis quærimus invidi*: 'Tis what, when we have enough, we are soon sick of; and in the want only, know the worth of. A Nation in the Heat of War, a Church in Flames of Persecution, can best demonstrate, that *Pax optima rerum, Quas homini novisse datum est*; that Peace is an excellent Mercy. —— Besides which, there are Two particular Considerations, that mightily recommend it to our Prayers.

I. That God is, as the *Author of Peace*, so the *Lover of Concord*. So we salute him daily; so we style him truly: For he it is that stilleth the Outrage of violent and unruly People; maketh Wars to cease; scattereth the People that delight in them; bows the Hearts of all the Men of *Israel* at once; makes Men of one Mind in an House; and when any Man's ways please him, makes his Enemies, if he think fit, whether they do or no, at peace with him. *Peace* is that to Almighty God, that the Ewe-Lamb was to the poor Man in *Nathan*'s Parable, 2 *Sam.* 12. 3. Not indeed bought with his Money; but born in his House, bred up with his Children, lyes

in his Boſome, and is unto him as a Daughter; and ſo very like himſelf, he cannot chuſe but love it. The ſame he would have us do for it; and therefore bids us, where we can in any meaſure, make it; where there is any hope of finding, ſeek it; when it comes to us, meet and entertain it; and when going from us, purſue it, and reduce it: In ſum, By all fair ways and means, make it our own, to have and to hold for ever.

II. *Peace* ſhall make thoſe happy, that heartily pray for it. This is the chief Argument the Exhortation in the Text is back'd with: They ſhall proſper, that love thee; well ſhall it be with them, that wiſh thee well; that having done thee all the good was in their own power, ſtrive to make Heaven thy Friend, and pray for peace within thy walls. So then, Would you have Healthful Seaſons, Fruitful Fields, and Full Barns? A Free Trade, and Flouriſhing Towns and Cities? Or would you proſper in the *inward Man*, and be *rich towards God*? Would you *fare ſumptuouſly every day* on pure Spirituals? Would you be cloath'd on Earth with purple Graces? Be crown'd in Heaven with Ever-

laſting

lasting Glory? All this, and all that Happiness that *Eye hath not seen*, nor *Ear heard*, nor can *Man's Heart imagine*, is in the power of Prayers, and within the compass of that Peace, which is our *Second*, and an Excellent Mercy. The

Third Excellency is, *Jerusalem*; an excellent City: *Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem.* But what! for that *Jerusalem* that is above? No sure, that's safe, and needs no Prayers: No Jesuits, Enthusiasts, Beutifeu's, Foxes, or Fire-brands, infest those happy Regions, that glorious City, with Factions, Wars, or Conflagrations: There's none can break the Peace, or interrupt the Joys of those bless'd Souls that are above. The *Jerusalem* of the Text, is what had *Melchizedeck* for its Founder; and when this Psalm was penn'd, had holy *David* for its Sovereign, and sole Law-giver; was the Metropolis of *Judea*, and Mother-Church of all the World. But what of this *Jerusalem* must we pray for? Does God take care for Oxen? says the Apostle: Or would our Author have us think, that he takes care for Stone and Timber, that he speaks here of Walls and Palaces? 'Tis true, Almighty God

does now and then, to ſignalize his Anger againſt incorrigible Sinners, not only deſtroy ſome, and diſperſe the reſt; but brings a Deſolation on the very Places of their Reſidence; and makes the ruinous Heaps of Cities, Monuments of his Diſpleaſure, and Documents to all Poſterity: The Earth that is defil'd by Sin, ſhall be burnt up by Fire. But here, while *David* prays himſelf, and bids us pray for *Sion*'s Peace, 'tis δι' ἡμᾶς μᾶλλον, as the Apoſtle reſolves his own Queſtion; *for us*, the Inhabitants firſt and chiefly: *For my brethren and companions ſake, I will now ſay, Peace be within thee.* ---- The *Jeruſalem* we are to pray for, is to be conſidered under a double Notion. (1.) As *Domus Regni.* (2.) As *Domus Religionis.* They are the words of a late reverend * Father *of*, and at laſt glorious Martyr *for* our Church, its Faith, and its Defender; whoſe Birth may juſtly be accounted one of the higheſt Honours, and greateſt Happineſſes of this Corporation; and whoſe Benefactions, though much ſhort of what he intended them, make many a glad Heart, here and elſewhere, every Year, and will do to the World's end: 'Tis from his Grace I borrowed the luſtre of ſome few Expreſſions before, and ſhall again immediately. *Firſt*

* *William Laud*, Archbiſhop of *Canterbury.*

First then: As *Domus Regni*, as the Representative of the State, or Body Politick. For there 'twas that Justice and Judgment were to be had in all Civil Matters; and from thence were all Commissions to Inferiour Courts, for doing it, deriv'd. *Sic volo, sic jubeo*: *I will and require*, (says St. *Paul*, in a plenitude of Apostolical Power, as *Grotius* apprehends him,) *that, above all things, Prayers, and Supplications, and giving of Thanks, be made; and above all men, for Kings, and those in Authority*; that they may enjoy their Prerogatives, and we our Privileges; that they live happy over us, and we easie under them.

Secondly: As *Domus Religionis*: As a Body Ecclesiastick, or a Church. For there was the House of the Lord, and thither the Tribes went yearly up, while God himself kept house at home, and all well: They went up to pay their Duties and Devotions, as by Law establish'd: And as they came not empty-handed, so they return'd full fraught with the best Blessings on themselves and theirs. The *Church* is like a Lilly among Thorns: Her Case in *general*, like St. *Paul*'s *particular*, in Perils every way, from profess'd Enemies without, and from pretended Friends within her: She's like

Vine, for her fertility and ſweetneſs; and no leſs, for her imbecility and weakneſs, in that it needs both fencing and ſupport, and needs her Childrens Prayers, to obtain that help of God for her. — To make our Prayers effectual, and to purpoſe, for *Jeruſalem*'s Peace, let us,

I. By all means poſſible, endeavour to get our Perſons accepted. When the Petitioner pleaſes, the Petition's commonly ſoon granted: *Daniel* was no ſooner on his Knees, was but at the beginning of his Prayers, had ſcarce ſaid, *Almighty and moſt merciful Father, we have erred, and ſtrayed from thy ways like loſt ſheep*; was but thus newly enter'd, and far from the End he deſign'd, when an Expreſs from Heaven is diſpatch'd immediately to him, and an Angel, half out of breath, acquaints him, he was heard in the very firſt Motion towards his Petition, and his Requeſt granted: For ſaith he, *Thou art greatly beloved*; or, nearer the Original, *Thou art a Man of Reputation and Credit*, Dan. 9. ---- Let us all then, with *Joſeph*, when to appear before *Pharaoh*, off with our Priſon-Cloaths, waſh and cleanſe our ſelves by Repentance, renew our Vows, and reſign our ſelves wholly up to the Grace of God, the Obedience of Chriſt, and to the happy Con-

duct

duct of the Holy Spirit. And if we do this, shall we not be accepted? Sure we shall, and our Prayers heard no doubt: Especially if,

II. Duly qualified with Faith, Fervency, and Humility: Without the first, no pleasing; without the latter, no prevailing with God. *Qui timidè rogat docet negare*; Who asks faintly, only desires to be deny'd easily. Good old Bishop *Latimer* being ask'd, Why Prayers produc'd no Miracles in those days? Answer'd, *Abest ignis*; There wants the Fire of Zeal and Fervency, to make them thus prolifick. And St. *James*'s only effectual, is the fervent Prayer of the Righteous. *Quamvis oscitanter, sed ardenter oratur.* There is a covetousness of base and beggarly things, which is Idolatry, and God abhors: But then there is a ζηλοῦτε τὰ χρείττονα, and we are bid covet, and that earnestly, those that are better: And a more excellent way to obtain those, I think, will not easily be shewn, than to pray for them with an earnest Importunity of Affection, and a graceful Modesty of Gesture and Expression. This generous Avarice, this noble Ambition, let us possess our Souls withall: Thus let us ply the Throne of Grace, and I should hope we shall assuredly speed, for the *Peace of Jerusalem.*

I can see nothing like to lett or hinder, but what may be very easily taken out of the way.

I. If it be said, We need not Pray at all; for that God, long before the Foundation of the World, drew his Scheme, and set his Resolution, and Rule of Acting, by a Decree not in the power of Prayer to alter: I answer, *First*, from *Deut.* 29. 29. That that Rule, Resolution, and Decree, are all Secrets to us, and belong only to him that made them; but what's reveal'd, and plain before us, that's our Duty; and that is, *Pray*. I answer, *Secondly*, from the Case of *Nineve*, That whenever the End is pre-ordain'd, the necessary Means conducing to that End are pre-ordain'd too: Their being sav'd upon their timely Repentance, shews us, the Decree was for them, though the Denunciation seem'd against them. Thus, had the mighty Works were done in *Capernaum*, been done in *Sodom*, it had stood to that very day our Saviour so expresly spoke those words, *Mat.* 11. 23.

II. If it be said, We need not Pray for *Peace*, much less *Jerusalem*'s; for that Almighty God has promis'd, in his Holy VVord, to do all those things we can pray for; which Promise He, for His part, will most certainly keep

keep and perform: I answer, There is a part for us to act too, to make the Promise of effect, from *Ezek.* 36. 36, 37. *I the Lord have spoken, and I will do it; I will YET for this be enquir'd of, by the house of Israel, to do it for them.* God will be enquir'd of, sollicited, and sought to; and less we cannot well do, than ask, to have.

III. If it be said, The Son of God himself, a Person without Exception, has ask'd, and been deny'd: I answer, He either ask'd, upon Condition it were possible, as St. *Matthew* gives the Account; that is, If it were consistent with the Divine Decree; which, in the Consternation, that Agony, and bloody Sweat he was then in; as mere Man, left alone, in the absence or quiescence of the Deity, he might either not know, or not remember. If it were not thus, and upon this Condition; then I answer, That his Prayer, *That the dreadful Cup might pass from him,* was with Submission, an unreserv'd Submission to his Father's Good-will and Pleasure: *Not as I will, but as thou wilt: Not my Will, but thine be done,* as St. *Mark* and St. *Luke* render it: He recoil'd at first, at thoughts of Death, as the Flesh and Blood he had about him very

might; but recollects himself soon after, recalls his Deprecation, and indeed Non-suits himself.

IV. If it be said, St. *Paul* pray'd, and his Prayer must needs be well qualify'd, it being made with repeated importunity; yet was repuls'd, and the Arrow-Head, shot from the Bow of Satan, stuck as fast in him, as before: I answer, That he went off with a better Boon, and greater Blessing, than he came for: An Assurance of the Love of God, that order'd it; Sufficiency of Strength, to bear it; and of Grace, to make the best use of it. And this is no more Denying, than in Father to give his Son *Bread*, that asks a *Stone*; to give him Fish, or Eggs, that asks a *Serpent*, or a *Scorpion*, (as our dearest Lord speaks:) No more Denying, than in a Physician to give his Patient, in a *Paroxisme*, a Cordial, that calls for cold Water, or Small-beer. These things then notwithstanding, The Righteous's Prayers remain no less their Duty; and what's their Happiness, in full force, effect, and virtue.

And now, my Reverend Fathers, and Christian Brethren, what remains, but that we all, WE above all, make that our Business, that appears

appears so much our Duty, and our Interest too? With all my heart, let Charity begin at home, so it don't terminate and end there. Pray we, and for our selves, for things absolutely necessary; and that inseperably accompany Salvation, as absolutely and as earnestly as we will: But for other, for inferiour things, I think we had best be cautious, we neither be too positive, nor too particular, lest we run the risk of *Icarus*, or *Phaeton*: or the poor Countryman, that pray'd *Mercury*, in the *Fable*, to shew him only the Thief that stole his Cow; who being brought to the place where an old Lyon was preying on her, had sav'd himself for Sawce, or else for Second Course, but that he quickly supersided his former Request, by a wiser, and a better. Have we a care of *Samson*'s Passion for a *Delilah*, though a Devil to him; and of *Rachel*'s Importunity for Children, though she dy'd for't. To beg more Ease, or outward Happiness, for our selves, than God thinks otherwise fit to give; or to give with it abundance of Grace, to make good Use of it, is, with our own Hands to pull Heaven upon our Heads; and crush our selves to pieces, under our own imprudent Prayers: 'Tis to desire to be helpt to that that's always

likely, and often ſure to hinder or deprive us of what is vaſtly better, and without which we are undone for ever: No, leave we theſe things to the diſpoſe and diſpenſation of him who better knows what's beſt for us, than we poor purblind and ſhort-ſighted Creatures do our ſelves.

But then, as to *Jeruſalem*, the Scene is chang'd; the Caſe is vaſtly alter'd from what 'tis with us ſingly: Here our Warrant is at large, without Exception, Reſerve, or Limitation. *Jer.* 29. 7. The Jews were bid ſeek the Peace of *Babylon*, and pray for the Peace of that City in which they were then Captives: Much more may, and ought we to pray for an omnimodous Proſperity of that Church and State whereof we are, or Sons or Members, in general, or particular: That the One be happy in a Union and Uniformity of Divine Service, inferior only to the Conſort of Cherubim and Seraphim, Angels, and the Spirits of the Juſt in the Choir of Heaven: That the other be happy in an univerſal Triumph of Truth, and Peace, Juſtice and Mercy, that have a mighty power in them, whereby to ſubdue all things to themſelves, and keep all Orders and Eſtates of Men in a Decorum. —— *Prayer* has done

mighty

mighty things of old, even in time of War: Has ſtopt the Sun and Moon in full career, and made them ſtand ſtill: Made Stars and Planets fight in their ſeveral courſes: The Clouds diſcharge themſelves in Thunder, Lightning, and an Overthrow, on one ſide; and in refreſhing Streams and Conqueſt on the other: Made Wind and Storm, fulfilling his Word, retort their Arrows, with double force, in the Faces of thoſe that ſhot them: And made the Sea it ſelf ſuck up and ſwallow Armies, of Chariots, Horſe, and Foot; not leaving a Courier to carry Tydings back, or tell their Friends who hurt them. The Hoſt of *Iſrael* it ſelf prevail'd no longer againſt *Amalack*, than the General not ſtood, and fought in Field; but ſtood for better Proſpect, and pray'd, hard by, with Heart and Hands lift up to Heaven. And who can tell but the Almighty Arm ſtays now but for a powerful pull of ſtrong Cryes and Prayers, to raiſe, and to exert it ſelf to a deciſive Battel, and the Extirpation of the Enemies of the Repoſe and Peace of *Chriſtendom*.

Pray we then, and with all our ſtrength and might, that God would bleſs, with his beſt Bleſſings, both our Dread and

Dear

Dear Sovereign Lord and Lady, KING WILLIAM, and QUEEN MARY, preserv'd for, and presiding over us, by many Miracles of Mercy; Each of them more worth than Ten thousand of us put together: The Darlings of Heaven, and the Delights of Mankind; who have already, by and under God, done so great things for us, we doubt we do but Dream of, though we behold them with open Face, and see them with our own Eyes. Bless we Almighty God for them, who has so evidently and so eminently appear'd with them: And pray we Almighty God, to go on to bless them still; and out-doe all that he has hitherto done for them, indeed for Us, *by* Them. Pray we, if ever we will Pray more, That God would cover His Majesty's Royal Head from Treachery and Violence in the Day of Battel; and Crown him with Success and Victory, wherever he meets with Difficulty or Opposition: That whether His or our Enemies innate Pride can be abated, or no; whether their inveterate Malice can be asswag'd, or no; yet, that their Devices may be confounded, and their Forces routed, never to rally more: That they may fly as the Dust before the Wind;

and

and He and His, as the Angels of the Lord, purſue them. In ſum: Pray we, That his Bow, like that of *Jonathan*, never return empty, till the *Mahometan Monſter* be brought within his firſt Bounds; and the *Moſt Chriſtian Perſecutor*, to Repentance. ---- Pray we, as if never to Pray more, with, as it were, the *laſt* and *utmoſt* Efforts of our Hearts and Souls, That the pureſt Joys from Heaven poſſeſs and fill Her Majeſty's Royal Breaſt; and, That the God of Heaven would guide her ſoft and tender Hand, gently and ſweetly to ſway the Scepter of theſe Kingdoms, to the general Joy of all good Men, in the abſence of her dearer Half. Pray we, That the God of Mercy would compaſs her about with Songs of Deliverance; and the Campaign happily ended. That the Unparallel'd Pair may meet, with Joy unſpeakable, and full of Triumph, and never part more. ---- In a word: If we love our God, our King, our Queen, or Countrey; if our Religion, Lives, Liberties, or Properties; if our Allies, Friends, Families, or Our Selves; let us all Pray: And thus,

Pray for the Peace of Jeruſalem.

I con-

I conclude what I have said, with what St. *Austin* did a certain Tract he writ; *Domine Deus, quæcunque dixi de Tuo, agnoscant & Tui; si qua de meo, & Tu ignosce, & Tui:* "To Thee, O Father, with the Son of "thy Love, and Spirit of all Grace, be "all Honour and Glory, now, and for "ever, *Amen.*

FINIS.